

REMARKS

The Office Action dated October 5, 2007, has been received and carefully reviewed. The preceding amendments and the following remarks form a full and complete response thereto. Claims 1, 5-11, and 18-26 and 28 have been amended. Claims 12-17 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. New claims 29-35 are added. The amendments to the claims relate to matters of form only. The new claims find support inter alia in the original claims. No new matter has been added. Claim 26 is currently withdrawn. Accordingly, claims 1-11 and 18-35 are pending in this application and are submitted for consideration.

Claims 1-25, 27 and 28 were rejected as failing to define the invention in the manner required by 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Applicants traverse the rejection and submit that claims 1-11, 18-25 and 27-35 comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. In particular, specific objections were made only to claims 7, 10, and 12-16 which are fully addressed below.

Claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claim 7 is amended to delete objected subject matter. Applicants submit that claim 7 complies with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for including elements that lacked antecedent basis. Claim 10 is amended to change the dependency thereof from claim 1 to claim 9. Applicants submit that claim 10 complies with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Claims 12-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite on the grounds that it is unclear from what reference recited “rotations” are made and to what the recited “transmission” is connected. Claims 12-15 have been cancelled, and this rejection is moot.

Claim 16 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite on the grounds that the limitations “first transmission output” in line 2 and “second and third transmission output” in line 3 lack antecedent basis. Claim 16 has been cancelled, and this rejection is moot.

Claims 1-9, 15, 17, 20-22, 24, 25 and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,371,473 to Saltsov et al. Claims 10-14, 16 and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,371,473 to Saltsov et al. Claims 18 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,347,473 to Saltsov et al. in view of U.S. Patent 6,241,069 to Mennie et al.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections and submit that claims 1-11 and 18-35 recite subject matter that is neither disclosed nor suggested by the cited prior art.

Claim 1 defines an apparatus for processing bank notes. The apparatus includes a transport system with a plurality of transport paths for transporting bank notes. The transport system includes a diverter device with a bidirectionally drivable transport path between two transport path branchings to permit bank notes in the transport path to be transported in two opposite directions. The diverter device has a

diverter module with at least four inputs/outputs, and this diverter module is a separate part.

Applicants submit that the rejections set forth in the Office Action are fundamentally incorrect because Saltsov fails to disclose each of the elements recited claim 1. In fact, the rejections are fundamentally flawed. For example, the Office Action states that reference number 1 refers to a "diverter device", which is nearly the complete opposite of what is really disclosed in Saltsov, in which reference number 1 refers to a validator device. (See col. 3, line 52.) Further, the Office Action appears to identify a transport path from a basically undefined bill input/output slot to the validator 1 by the centers of the diverter 500. The rejection is deficient because it fails to identify which item is representing the transport path branchings. This remains unclear since the diverters 500, which appear to be illustrated in Figs. 21 to 24, indeed divert bank notes from the transport paths, but pass the banknotes directly to accumulator devices 2, 3a, 3b or 3c, as it is evident from Figs. 16 and 17 relating to the embodiment of Fig. 15. Also, Saltsov fails to disclose a branching of the transport paths which would have to exist even without a switch that only distributes bank notes to the branches.

Moreover, the Office Action misuses the claim term "module." According to the Office Action, a "module" is given by a combination of elements 2, 3a, 3b, 3c having 12 inputs/outputs. However, one skilled in the in the field of mechanical engineering would understand that a module describes a unit that is manageable as a whole and may interact with other units. Such interpretation of the wording "module" is also supported,

for example, by the respective entry in the Merriam-Webster online dictionary, which is attached hereto.

The accumulator devices 2, 3a, 3b, 3c cited by the Office Action thus are each, themselves modules, which do not form a switching assembly having four inputs and outputs. In the embodiment of Figs. 15-17 of Saltsov, each of these accumulators comprises one single combined input/output slot. Moreover, the interpretation that the entirety of the accumulators forms a "diverter module" does not lead any further, since the respective number of transport path branchings is absent. Additionally, Fig. 28 clearly shows that both the accumulators 2, 3a, 3b, 3c and the diverter 500 are not modules at all.

Thus, Saltsov fails to disclose or suggest each and every element of claim 1, upon which claims 2-11 and 18-35 depend. Applicants submit that none of the remaining cited art cures the above-described deficiencies of Saltsov. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection of claims 1-11 and 18-28 be withdrawn and claims 1-11 and 18-35 be allowed.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks presented herein, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance and should now be passed to issue. A Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited.

If any extension of time is required in connection with the filing of this paper and has not been requested separately, such extension is hereby requested. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees and to credit any overpayments

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